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Today's featured article

Ulysses S. Grant (1822–1885) was an American military officer and politician who served as the 18th president of the United States from 1869 to 1877. Grant led the Union Army to victory in the American Civil War as general-in-chief under Presidents Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson. He was the first president elected after the passage of the Reconstruction Amendments, which abolished slavery and established civil rights for African Americans. Grant's presidency was marked by his efforts to protect the rights of freedmen during Reconstruction, but his administration was also plagued by corruption scandals and economic depression. Born in Ohio, Grant graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1843 and fought in the Mexican–American War. He struggled in civilian life, resigning from the army in 1854 and working as a farmer and real estate agent before the outbreak of the Civil War. Commissioned as a colonel of volunteers, he rose to command the Union armies after victories in the Western Theater. Grant's military campaigns, including the Vicksburg Campaign and the Overland Campaign, led to the defeat of the Confederate States Army and the end of the war. He received the Confederate surrender at Appomattox Court House in April 1865. As president, Grant supported the Republican Party's efforts to enforce the rights of African Americans in the South. He signed the Enforcement Acts to combat the Ku Klux Klan and other white supremacist groups, and he established the Department of Justice to prosecute violations of civil rights. His administration also negotiated the Treaty of Washington with Great Britain, which resolved outstanding disputes from the war and led to a period of peaceful relations between the two countries. Grant's presidency was also marked by a series of corruption scandals, including the Whiskey Ring and the Credit Mobilier of America. Despite his personal honesty, Grant was criticized for his failure to hold his subordinates accountable. The Panic of 1873 led to a severe economic depression, which contributed to the Democratic Party's gains in the 1874 midterm elections. After leaving office, Grant embarked on a world tour and became a partner in a failed investment firm. He died of throat cancer in 1885 and was buried in Grant's Tomb in New York City. Historians rank Grant's presidency as below average, but his military leadership is widely regarded as one of the most successful in American history. (Full article...)

Recently featured:

- Battle of Fort Sumter
- Battle of Gettysburg
- Battle of Vicksburg

Archive

In the news

- Ongoing: Russo-Ukrainian War
- Ongoing: Gaza war
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- 2026 Portuguese presidential election
- 2026 Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly election
- 2026 Thai general election
- 2026 Tonga cyclone
- 2026 Uganda general election
- 2026 Venezuelan crisis
- 2026 Yemeni crisis
- Deaths in 2026

On this day

May 15: Saint Isidore the Farmer's Day (Catholic Church)

- 1264 – Battle of Lewes: Henry III of England was defeated by Simon de Montfort, 6th Earl of Leicester.
- 1602 – Captain Bartholomew Gosnold left Falmouth, England, on a voyage to the New World.
- 1718 – Blackbeard's last battle: Blackbeard was killed in a fierce battle with Lieutenant Robert Maynard off the coast of North Carolina.
- 1811 – Paraguay declared its independence from Spain.
- 1862 – American Civil War: President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act into law.
- 1918 – The first scheduled airmail flight in the United States departed from Washington, D.C.
- 1940 – World War II: The Netherlands surrendered to Nazi Germany.
- 1972 – Arthur Bremer shot Alabama governor George Wallace, leaving him paralyzed.
- 1988 – Soviet–Afghan War: The Soviet Union began withdrawing its troops from Afghanistan.
- 2011 – Occupy movement: Protesters in Madrid, Spain, began occupying Puerta del Sol.

Today's featured picture

Credit: Ivan Aivazovsky

The Ninth Wave (1850) by Ivan Aivazovsky depicts survivors of a shipwreck clinging to the mast of their overturned boat as they are about to be overwhelmed by a huge wave. The painting is inspired by the Russian folk belief that the ninth wave is the largest and most dangerous. Aivazovsky was a prolific painter of seascapes and battle scenes, and this work is considered one of his most dramatic and emotionally powerful.

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